

**STARK TUSCARAWAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING**

**July 9, 2025, at 12:00 p.m.**

**Zoom**

<b>PRESENT</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>	<b>STWDB STAFF</b>
Marla Akridge	Damus Cole	JoAnn Breedlove
Rick Baxter	Tracy Sabo	Rebecca Harris
Stephen Carson		Maddy Miller
Andrew Fowler		Michael Mouser
Lisa Gould		Aleisha Stout
Para Jones		<b>LEO</b>
Alison Kerns		Commissioner Ress
Mike Lauber		
Susan Lenigar		
Stephanie Maier	<b>Guests</b>	
Marc Manheim	Lisa Barrow-Presenter (Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland)	<b>ONE-STOP OPR/FISCAL AGENT</b>
Joel McKenzie	Kelly Byer-The Canton Repository	Chuck Byrd
Rick Moss	Mary Kate Hastings – Senator Husted	Freda Martin
Steve Rippeth	Monique Moore-Governor’s Office	Logan Little
Scott Robinson		Amy Miller
Joe Sekely		Dan Sipe
Sarah Spies		Lori Yager
Darren Van Winkle		
Patrice Yacko		

**BUSINESS MINUTES**

**CALL TO ORDER**

**Scott Robinson**, Chair called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

**Presenter Introduction**..... Scott Robinson, Chair  
Lisa Barrow, Vice President, Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland leading the department’s regional analysis and outreach group. She presented on the National and Regional Economic Conditions & Outlook. Her biography was linked and shared in the calendar invitation

**Introductions / Member Updates**..... Scott Robinson, Chair

- **New Board Members’ Introductions & Welcome (Attachment A)**
  - **Stephanie Maier** who currently serves as the Senior Director of Human Resources at Metallus Inc.
  - **Joel McKenzie** who currently serves as the Human Resources Business Partner for Tractor Supply Company’s distribution center in Navarre.

- **New STWDB Staff Members Introductions & Welcome (Attachment B)**
  - **Aleisha Stout** joined the board staff in late February as Assistant Director.
  - **Michael Mouser** joined the board staff in June as Workforce Solutions Manager and is working closely with the Business Resource Network initiative.
- **Board Member Retirement**
  - **John Aldergate** recently retired from Cleveland Clinic Union Hospital as Director, HR Services. He has served on the board since 2022 and as Vice Chair since 2024. We thanked John for his service to the board and wish him well in this new chapter.

**May 7, 2025, Meeting Minutes**..... Scott Robinson, Chair (Attachment C)

**MOTION: JONES MOVED FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE MAY 7, 2025, MEETING MINUTES. CARSON SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**Committee Updates**.....Scott Robinson, Chair

**Executive Committee**..... Scott Robinson, Chair  
 Robinson reported that on June 12, 2025, the Executive Committee met and received updates regarding the proposed PY25 budget. With reduced funding and limited special project/grant funding availability over the last couple of years, there is a necessity to reduce youth/young adult programming expenses. The Committee reviewed the existing "Incentives for CCMEP WIOA Youth Participants Enrolled in Eligible Activities" and a proposed/updated "Incentive" schedule. Incentives are intended for goal achievements and milestones and are aligned with WIOA/CCMEP performance metrics.

The Committee APPROVED adjustments to the "Incentive" schedule effective July 1, 2025, that preserves the intent of the incentives with reducing expenses.

The Committee also received updates regarding the transition of the Jobs Platform websites to an updated tool that can share localized labor market information at a reduced expense. In addition, updates regarding the required Regional/Local Planning process were shared.

The Committee also received an overview of proposed scopes of service and respective evaluation tools for the designated services and procured services providers.

- The board created a subgrant agreement with a budget for a variety of designated services provided by the Workforce Initiative Association, the designated provider of career, business and other services. The board also created an agreement with a budget for procured Job Center Operator services with the Workforce Initiative Association, as the provider.
- The Committee reviewed and APPROVED, effective Program Year 2025 (July 1, 2025-June 30, 2026) the presented:
  - Designated Services "Scopes of Work" and Evaluation of Services
  - Procured Job Center Operator Services "Scope of Work" and Evaluation of Services.

**Job Center Committee**..... Steve Rippeth, Chair  
Breedlove reported that the Job Center Committee meets quarterly with the last meeting on June 6, 2025.

At the meeting, the Job Center Committee description was reviewed so that all parties understand the committee’s role and purpose. The Job Center Committee is a STWDB committee that ensures the OhioMeansJobs centers in Stark and Tuscarawas Counties effectively serve the local workforce and support regional economic growth. The committee’s primary role is to support the management, coordination, and continuous improvement of services provided by the centers to both job seekers and employers and its members represent the collective required/non-required partners that comprise the OhioMeansJobs Stark and Tuscarawas County Center systems (18 program partners).

Breedlove said, partners were recently surveyed on the value of the OhioMeansJobs partnership with 13 of 18 responses recorded. In the responses, partners value the current benefits of the partnership and shared some suggested improvements that include a desire for more exposure to employers, access to county/area specific workforce trends information, and professional development opportunities. Partners also shared interests in shared resources, joint trainings/workshops, increased collaboration, better employer engagement and strong referral systems.

The Committee discussed some suggested, prioritized goals such as robust referrals of individuals made to partner programs through the centers, employer engagement activities, and professional development.

STWDB staff and the Committee Chair will identify which goals reflect the committee’s priorities.

**Director’s Report / Updates**..... JoAnn Breedlove, Executive Director  
Breedlove thanked Dr. Lisa Barrow, representative of the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland, for her presentation at the meeting.

Breedlove welcomed new board members, Stephanie Maier and Joel McKenzie.

Breedlove referenced the board meeting packet which was attached to the meeting invitation and included several documents that are for reference only like the director’s summary, programmatic, communication and treasurer/financial reports.

**Business Resource Network (BRN) Updates**

Breedlove noted we have introduced Michael Mouser as the Workforce Solutions Manager. Mouser reports to Stout, and the board’s BRN initiative will transition this current Program Year into a more workforce-centric initiative, instead of a “business retention/expansion” model. The board will be kept informed about the transition activities this year. The region continues to recognize that “workforce” remains the number one challenge/need for employers with “workforce” as a multi-faceted, complicated, ever-changing topic. The intent of the board with this initiative is never to duplicate services in the community; we desire to align and enhance, and we will do this by leveraging existing partnerships with organizations that have a “stake” in workforce.

Breedlove noted, we are clarifying/updating 3 “partner” roles for partners that are engaged in the BRN; Program & Services Partners, Workforce Adjacent Partners, and Employer Pursuing Partners. The **Program & Services Partners** are organizations that offer workforce-related services or resources and directly provide solutions to workforce needs. **Workforce Adjacent Partners** are entities that do not offer direct workforce solutions but could help connect businesses to the Business Resource Network. An example would be an organization that assists an employer but doesn’t provide a specific workforce solution. **Employer Pursuing Partners** are organizations focusing on working directly with employers and their primary goal is business engagement and economic development. An example would be the economic development entities in the region. Each will contribute to minimizing any overlap. Goals include a shared referral process and consistent data tracking to help the region better understand how employer resources are being used, identify service gaps, and have the ability to respond more effectively to hyper-local real time employer needs.

Breedlove announced we will host a “kick-off” with all three stakeholder partner groups on September 8, 2025, and will extend the event invitation to our board members who would like to participate.

### **Operation/Compliance Activities:** (Attachment D)

Breedlove noted the board packet with a document titled “Attachment D,” outlining our progress on required Board activities for Program Year 2025. Notable completions include:

- **Board Certification Letter**-letter certifying the board for 2 years which is a requirement for workforce development boards.
- **Regional/Local Planning**-is currently underway. This is a requirement for WIOA regions to complete a regional planning process every 4 years to align workforce strategies, address service delivery and address employment needs of individuals and employers. Our region is known as the East Ohio Region and consists of Stark, Tuscarawas, Mahoning, Columbiana and Trumbull Counties. The draft plan will be available for a 30-day public comment period beginning Monday, July 14-August 13. We will share communication on how to access the plan draft. We will/review/address comments, finalize any edits, share copies at the September board meeting, request signatures from our LEOs and submit by 9/30/25.
- **OhioMeansJobs Center Certification Process** – is where the board certifies the centers every three years to ensure they meet established standards. This is due at the end of the year, and we will form a small group of board member volunteers to assist.

### **Other Updates**

- **Greater Stark County Urban League Agreement**-The agreement between the board and the Greater Stark County Urban League (GSCUL) has completed on 6/30/25 since the funding is completed. As a reminder the GSCUL has received funding for an employment navigator program from Ohio Department of Job & Family Services (ODJFS) and that funding, along with its monitoring/compliance activities were assumed by the board/fiscal agent.
- **Current Federal Unauthorized Legislation**-Breedlove had previously provided updates regarding the current federal unauthorized legislation, executive orders, the President’s FY2026 funding request as well as a recent DC visit two weeks ago. She also included state budget bill workforce-related provision updates.

Since the Budget Bill passed, we have been navigating workforce specific updates:

- Workforce PELL (funding for eligible individuals for short term training (less than 600 hours) provided through specific training providers; begins July 2026.
  - Make American Skilled Again (MASA) proposal not included in the bill
  - WIOA reauthorization – consensus that there is a willingness from both the House Committee on Education & the Workforce and the Senate HELP committee to start the discussions again on workforce. The “vehicle” to do that will be ASWA (A Stronger Workforce for America Act) legislation.
- The **Jobs Platform websites** which the board has maintained for several years that shared localized data from the “backside” of OMJ.com. The data was aggregated monthly and shared on the sites with information such as top trending employers, a historical perspective on the number of available jobs each month, education requirements for those job postings and much more. We have secured the use of **Lightcast**, a premier labor market information vendor and will utilize customized data visualization dashboards of labor market information. These tools/dashboards will be available to access on the boards’ website and will be automatically updated/refreshed quarterly. The data dashboards will be presented to show data for the workforce area, Stark County and Tuscarawas County. We hope to have these implemented by September 2025.
  - The reviewing/updating a number of **board policies** will be done throughout the year and will bring any forward that require board review/action. One of Stout’s roles is oversight of the board policies, so we have a plan in place to accomplish this by June 2026. For any program policies that require board approval, we will take those to the Executive Committee for review and then to the board for review/approval.
  - Breedlove thanked **Steve Rippeth** and **Scott Robinson** for sharing highlights from the recent Committee meetings. Breedlove noted the Board maintains 5 board committees: Executive, Job Center, Youth, Dislocated Worker, Marketing/Outreach/Engagement.
    - Rippeth chairs the **Job Center Committee**, and we appreciate his engagement as we work closely with our job center partners to strengthen the value of the partnership for the OMJ workforce system partners while also establishing goals that are measurable, and partner informed.
    - As board chair, Robinson chairs the **Executive Committee**. At our recent meeting, we discussed the board’s budget that would be prepared/proposed to the board’s Council of Governments oversight. The most recent WIOA funding decrease (6.1%), as well as limited opportunities to access special project grants/funding, has required us to review our area’s Comprehensive Case Management Employment Program (CCMEP) (Ohio’s youth program) programming. As a quick reminder, since 2016 that program blends the WIOA Youth funding the board receives and the TANF funding the Lead agency (Workforce Initiative Association)

receives to serve eligible 16–24-year-olds. We have made some cuts to existing programs and revising an existing “**Incentive**” payment schedule for participants will help us align the budget. The “Incentives” are payments participants can receive for programmatic milestones/achievements such as getting job, staying in a job for a certain period of time, getting a credential. These are all worthy, allowable and performance-metric aligned endeavors. The Executive Committee approved a reduction in some of those incentive payment amounts beginning July 1, 2025 with an anticipated saving of about \$150K.

- Breedlove noted that Robinson also shared information about “**Scopes of Service**” and “**Evaluations**” for our designated service provider and procured **Job Center Operator**: Quick Refresher – we facilitated a procurement process for the Job Center Operator earlier this year and the board approved moving forward with an agreement for these services July 1, 2025. The Job Center Operator agreement is with the Workforce Initiative Association (WIA) and it’s a required role as part of the OMJ system to have a dedicated entity be at the “hub” to convene, communicate, collaborate with the partners that make up our centers.
- Our designated service provider Workforce Initiative Association (WIA) provides a variety of services in the centers. The OMJ center report is a reporting of business services, training services, RESEA services, and more. The board designates these services through a sub-agreement with an approved budget and WIA is the provider. Likewise, the Job Center Operator maintains a specific service role for the board which is a board agreement with the provider.
- Breedlove noted, it is our mutual intention as board staff and designated provider staff to come to a mutual understanding/agreement of the “scopes of services” for each of those service categories so that there is clear understanding, alignment, expectations of each of the service categories as well as an objective evaluation of each. Likewise for the Job Center Operator agreement; the service scope is outlined along with an evaluation component.
- This first year will be a high-level evaluation of the designated services with no formal quantitative metrics and more qualitative metrics, anticipating the future evaluation will include more quantitative metrics.
- The Executive Committee received a packet of these scopes of services and evaluation components for all designated service categories and for Job Center Operator agreement. The committee reviewed them, provided comments and then approved them for the PY25 program year which began July 1, 2025.

**Officer Elections** .....Scott Robinson, Chair  
Officer Elections will be held at the September 3<sup>rd</sup> Board Meeting. Rebecca Harris will share information on behalf of Damus Cole who is the board Secretary and Nominations Chairperson regarding the officer election nominations. Interested board members should reach out to Rebecca Harris at [rharris@omjwork.com](mailto:rharris@omjwork.com)

**Adjourned:** 1:07 p.m.

**NEXT MEETING: September 3, 2025, 12:00 PM Stark State College**